FYI. The Willamette River is the topic for tomorrow's "Think Out Loud" talk show from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on OPB radio. Doug Drake, the Willamette Basin coordinator for DEQ, will be one of the guests along with Travis Williams of the Willamette Riverkeeper and someone from the Portland Triathlon.

I asked Doug to mention the Portland Harbor booths at the community fair.

http://action.publicbroadcasting.net/opb/posts/list/1479411.page

Are You Gonna Swim In That?

[Posted by David Abravanel on August 21, 2008]
Ask the average Oregonian to drink a glass of Willamette River water and the response is likely to be... well, less than enthusiastic. Yet, for some cities along the Willamette, the river has provided an excellent water source for the past few years. And over 200 local swimmers will brave the waters next weekend as part of the second annual Portland Triathlon, which this year will be part of the inaugural Riverfest 2008HYPERLINK "http://www.portlandtri.com/". This week also marks eighth annual Paddle Oregon trip up the Willamette, with over 100 participants.

Of course, the Willamette River is still not entirely in the clear. The Portland harbor has a whole mess of EPA Superfund sites, and heavy rainfall -- like we've had this week -- can cause sewage to overflow into the river, leading to swim advisories.

So just how safe -- for swimming, for angling, for boating, for drinking -- is the Willamette? Do you do you any those activities? Is the river making a comeback? What solutions are available for its future health?

When you hear "Willamette," what comes to mind?